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PRIMITIVE MAN

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MUNDURUCÚ NOTICES

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Introduction

THE warrior tribe of the Mundurucú is divided into four chief groups: the Tapajós, the Madeira, the Xingú, and the Jurueña Mundurucú. The Tapajós Mundurucú, numbering about 950 souls, inhabit the Tapajós river country from the Cururu to the Rio das Tropas, these two rivers being affluents of the Tapajós flowing in from the east. According to native tradition, the Wiawyen, who are related by language to the Tapajós Mundurucú, should be included with them; they live in the region around the source of the Rio Marum, a tributary of the Tapajós flowing in from the right. I have no data on the population of the Wiawyen. The Madeira Mundurucú came from the Tapajós in the second half of the eighteenth century and acquired territory for themselves in the State of Amazonas. They were visited by Martius. Nimuendajú estimates their strength at approximately 800 souls. The Xingú Mundurucú are the Kuruáya. They live in small groups of from one to four houses along the uppermost left tributaries of the Igarapé da Flecha, a large easterly tributary of

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[6] the middle Rio Cururú in Brazil. According to Nimuendajú they number about 120 souls. The Jurúna Mundurucú are also called Xipaibókwega.

From the Mundurucú are also supposed to be descended the Guajajára. They were settled on the Rio Gurupi near Cezarédello in 1848. So says Martius.

Tribal Names

[7] a. What do the Tapajós Mundurucú call themselves? A designation for the whole tribe does not exist. When a Mundurucú speaks of his fellow tribesmen, he simply calls them *wuyé'eye*, "our own", "our people". The word is compounded of the absolute inclusive pronoun *wuyé'e*, "we", and the plural suffix, *-aye*. Thus it has the meaning: "A great many of our own", "a plurality of our own". The Mundurucú language seems to have no word for human, human being. Expressions like the following are used: "I belong to the Red Arara *ab*"; "he belongs to the Seringueira-tauba *ab*"; "there come the Japu [people of Japu *ab*]"; "we met people of the *Ihupi*-wasp *ab*"; "some of the Mutum *ab*". For the [illegible] of *ab*, see infra under social organization.

The Madeira Mundurucú, and the Kuruáya, that is, the Xingú Mundurucú, are held by the Tapajós Mundurucú to be relatives

126 [illegible] The following phonetic symbols are used: *ä* = German *ä* (palatal); *ï* = German *e* (palatal); vowel with glide = nasalized vowel; *ã* = nasalized *a*; falling diphthongs in which both vowels are pronounced distinctly have small superior second vowel; *ə* = German *ach*; *ñ* = *ng* (guttural nasal); *s* = dental *s*; *z* = always voiceless; *r* as in English but pronounced with lips closer together; *w* as in English "water"; *x* = German *ch*; *y* as in English "yes.". The spiritus lenis (stimmloser Kehlkopfexplosivlaut) occurs always between two vowels, and often before words beginning with a vowel; in these cases it is not indicated in transcription; in other cases it is indicated by *q*. Weak sounds are enclosed in brackets. Colon after vowel = long vowel. Accent is on last syllable, except where otherwise indicated by accent mark (') following vowel.

The palatal vowels *ä* and *ï* are acoustically related to German *ä* and *e*, but they are not identical with them. Nimuendajú writes me (personal letter, 1931): "A genuine *ä* and *ï*, such, for example, as occur in German, are found in none of the more than seventy Indian languages which I have heard with my own ears. Up to the present, I have heard these two sounds only in Urupá; but they do not occur even in Turá, which is most closely related to Urupá".

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or kin, *kar'yaye*. The Xingú Mundurucú are also called by the Tupí(n)a Mundurucú *Tyamyi-ena-ut*, "Tamirinara tribe or clan", as they make their loin, arm and ankle bands out of tamirinara bark. The linguistically related Wiamyem are called *i kaiowa*, "hidden"—hidden in the region of the headwaters of the Rio Manum.

b. By what names are the Mundurucú known to other tribes? These names differ much. The Mundurucú are called among the Apiacá, their friends, by the name of Pari, or [illegible]pe Mundurukú; among the Bacairí, Mundurúsi; among the Chiquito, Karurú; among the Jurúna, Kaluríz; among the Kuruáya, Karudiat (compare Munduruçuan *Karo-ruat*, Red Arara sib); among the Manazé Paiú; among the Mora, Patiú; among the Tapuyá, Tcurumí (?); among the Parecí, Saruma (see infra); among the Toré, Kaubób; among a more distant tribe, Akékakuru. Among the Dyurupáia, a "giant" Indian tribe, the Mundurucú are called Tapáia. The Dyurupáia say: "When we come, they cry *tapáia'a* and then flee". The reference here is to the tribe which the Apiacá call Urupáia. The Dyurupáia must speak Apiacá. In Apiacá, *tapáia'ã*, *tapáia'ẽ*, means "Indian, stranger". Among the Widafawat, the Mundurucú are called Tapuyá'a, so the Mundurucú say.

c. How are the Mundurucú called by the "civilized" people? The most common designation is Mundurucú. Nothing certain is known about the origin or meaning of this name, so I shall not go into the matter here. They are also called Caras Pretas, "Black Faces", on account of the dark (not black) tattooing on their faces. Their third name is Pakisé. The word comes from the Língua Geral, a corrupted Tupí-dialect, and means "Father Knife", as the Mundurucú were known as head hunters, although not as cannibals.

In the State of Matto Grosso the Mundurucú were known as Sarumí (see supra). As Von den Steinen noted, they lived there next to the Apiacá, and disturbed all the tribes of the Arinos and Xingú region by their attacks.

d. How do the Mundurucú call outsiders? Every non-Mundurucú, be he a "Brown-shirt" or be he some one with a pretension to a veneer of culture, is a *parisun*, a foreigner, to the "real-humans". But of course the Mundurucú living on the

[See errata sheet, Category 116, p 57A - Analysis]

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Madeira and the Xingú are not partisan to the Tapajós Mundurucú; they are hereditary enemies, as explained previously.

The Brazilians are called Bateremera. They are held in esteem, as are also the Parawat the inhabitants of Belem do Pará, and the Bindecaterewat the inhabitants of the capital. The "Cearenser" [people of Ceará ?], the Carawat known as "Mossorhelden," have a bad reputation. The Jodereyat the Jews, are hated, as having treated the Mundurucú very badly ? after a certain Jew brought in measles on the Cururu and the Barra in 1876, starting an epidemic to which a large number of Mundurucú and Apiacá fell victims. friendship became definitely a thing of the past.

Some Notes on General Culture

The basis of the economic life of the Mundurucú is hoe culture. They maintain that formerly manioc and all other domesticated plants were unknown among them and that they used to obtain their food supply solely through hunting and through gathering wild fruits. In their hunting they use arrows made of single pieces of wood. The Mundurucú never kills his domestic animals, but he will partake of such meat if another has it at hand. The wild fruits are gathered by the women. Shortage of food can easily prevail, but is not the rule. If meat and fish are lacking, there are wild fruits and the products of the gardens. For the rest the Mundurucú endures enforced fast with stoic patience without indulging in futile complaints.

The Mundurucú remember well the time when they used huts with conical roofs. These huts have now been superseded by quadrangular ones with the corners almost always rounded off.

The Mundurucú have a very clear and sharply defined belief in a Supreme Being. He is called Karusakaibé, and appears to have been a historical personage. He is prayed to; I have gathered a collection of such prayers. More about him will appear infra.

More too will be said below about social organization as it prevails among the Mundurucú, which topic is a chief one of the present paper. The foregoing summary data are given merely as a background. As regards social organization we may however premise here that the man holds a position of predominance among the Mundurucú. Nevertheless the woman is decidedly respected. On the part of both man and woman, love for the child is marked.

[See errata sheet, category H, p.57—A.—Analyst]

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It may be remarked incidentally that the Mundurucú children have the Mongolian spot, as have also the Apiacá children.

Moieties and Sibs

The Tapajós Mundurucú,—and probably also the Madiera and Xingú Mundurucú,—have a well-developed moiety and sib system. The members of the individual sibs, with few exceptions seemingly, consider themselves related to the eponymous animals and plants. In the lists which we give below the plant totems are marked with an "(m)". Several of the sibs have plural or multiple totems.

The ancestors of the sib are called *tubé* or *ti*, and are embodied (verkoerpert) in the large *kuduke*-wind-instruments which are looked upon as having life. The *kuduke* are blown at the men's festival (Maennerfest). At the end of the festival or rite, *mĕsĕri*, a drink prepared for the festival out of manicuera is poured into the *kuduke* from above, is caught in a cüia (native cup), and is drunk. The meaning of the ceremony is this: The ancestor of the sib is not to get angry; he is always to remain benignant toward his children.

A member of the Red Arara sib is in no sense prohibited to shoot and to eat an arara. The same holds for the members of other sibs toward their respective eponymous animals and plants.

The sibs are arranged in two moieties or marriage groups, the "Whites" and the "Reds". This arrangement was ordained by Karusakaibé,—himself a "Red"—since he belonged to the *Karuakaut*, the Red Arara sib. The moieties are strictly exogamous. The members of each moiety are under obligation to marry, not within their own moiety, but into the other moiety. Disobedience to this precept of the culture-bringing god, Karusakaibé is considered as an unheard-of thing.

The sibs are rigidly patrilineal, that is, the children become members of their father's sib. Only where sibs are *i barip*, "related" (verwandt), may a child become a member of one of these related sibs. The Macaco prego sib and the Spider sib are, for example, "related".

It has previously been mentioned that the Mundurucú formerly had *Tiga kuakat*, huts with conical roofs. These huts are the dwelling places of totemistically organized tribes (Staemme). The last

[See arrata shell, category 116, p. 57-A. — Analyst]

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such hut stood until recently upon the Ikuribi, a plain not far from our Cururu mission.

I shall now give the names of the moieties and of the respective sibs under each moiety:

A. Moiety of the Whites, *i ririty'uye*

1. *Ari* tree (m). 2. Cotton bush (m). 3. *Datye* sparrow hawk. 4. Sloth. 5. Fish otter. 6. *Ikũ* sparrow hawk. 7. *Ikupi* wasp. 8. Jabuti [Land tortoise]. 9. Japim [?]. 10. Toad. 11. Macaco de cheiro [Chrysothrix ?]. 12. Macaco prego [Cebus fatuellus]. 13. Piaba [a fish]. 14. Seringueira-Itaúba (m) [rubber tree]. 15. Spider. 16. Swamp deer (Sumpfhirsch). 17. Taperibazeiro (m) [genus Spondias ?]. 18. Wild cat (Wildkatze). 19. *Y'utu* tree (m).

B. Moiety of the Reds, *i pəpčkə'uye*

20. Corôca [a bird ?]. 21. Cutia [aguti, Dasyprocta]. 22. Jacu [guan, Penelope]. 23. Japu [Cassicus, Ostinops or Xanthornus]. 24. *Kahahebu* bird. 25. *Kapak* (Red Juriti ? *W'aremaryu pakpak-t'ixut* ?]. 26. Mãe da lua [a nocturnal bird]. 27. Mutum [curassow, Crax]. 28. Roe-deer (Reh). 29. Red Arara [red macaw]. 30. Saúba [an ant, Oecodoma cephalotes]. 31. Black Arara [black macaw]. 32. *U'yui* wasp. 33. *W'aru* tree (m). 34. Cricket (Zirpe).[2]

TRADITIONAL ORIGIN OF THE SIB SYSTEM

The sibs are supposed originally to have been independent tribes. "Os *rinuet* foram primeiro nações," was told me without my inquiring into this fact. The tribes had been at war with one another. Then came Karusakaibè and united them into one large nation, the Mundurucú confederacy. This great Indian event is supposed to have taken place where the Tapajós Mundurucú now live.

"Who told you this?" I asked my informant, a man who was in his best years. "An old man of the plain told me that," was the answer. In order to be more certain, I had the story repeated later in Mundurucú. This is the translation:

[2] The identifications, given in angular brackets in these two paragraphs, have been added by the editor,—in some cases tentatively only,—from more readily available sources in ZE, JSAP, etc.—Ed.

[See errata sheet, category 116, p. 57-A — Analyst]

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"In olden days the sibs, *rinut*, lived very far apart from one another. They warred among themselves. Then they became brothers.[1] Karusakaibè said, 'No more killing! Let us just be brothers.' 'Now let us be gay. Now everything is all right,' said he."

In this manner through Karusakaibè there arose the Mundurucú confederacy. The brave "Black-faces" have done quite right in giving this noble Indian the honorable title "*Our Father*". As they express it, *Karusakaibè uey ebai*, "Karusakaibè is our father."

Myth of Early Matriarchy and of its Abolition

This tale was received in two versions. I shall here relate the shorter of the two.

"In olden days the women were in possession of the Men's House, *ẽkxa*, while the men lived in the Big House, *ẽkqa*.

"The men had to do all the work for the women. They had to hunt, fetch firewood, and even provide the mandioca roots and bake the meal. All these things they did. They also carried the water.

"Now, at this time three women—namely, Yanyubèri, the ruler of our people, Taiñbiru and Paraware—found three *kaduke*. They took these wind instruments in a brook: they caught three little Jeju fishes. They tried the instruments. 'They sound good,' said they. Now they played: they played every day in the forest. Secretly they went there. Then the men became suspicious. 'Where can the women be going all the time?' they said. They hid themselves and kept watch. Then it was that they saw how the women played. Said the men, 'What shall we do?' 'We don't know,' they concluded. Then said the youngest brothers of Yanyubèri, that is Marimarebè and Mariburubè: 'Let us take the *kaduke* away from them. Why, the women folk don't even hunt, whereas we have to take this work upon ourselves alone!' So they spoke, and took the *kaduke* for themselves. They tried them. 'They sound good,' they said. Then they played.

[1] Wia'nyen of Wituri appeared in October, 1927. From the signs which they left behind them, our Mundurucú concluded that these people who speak a related language wanted to become brothers.

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CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS

THE following corrections and additions should be made to the article "Mundurucú Moieties", by Father Albert Kruse, O.F.M., in PRIMITIVE MAN, Oct., 1934, 8:51-57:

p. 53. line 9: Itâwā't instead of Itᵉwā't
line 13: Matanawi' instead of Matanawĭ'
line 15: Kaubé'k instead of Kaubék
line 17: "The Mundurucú say" instead of "The Dyurupéa say"
lines 17 and 20: *Tapi'aᵉ'ñ, tapiaᵉ'ñ* instead of *Tapi'aᵉ'n, tapiaᵉ'n*
p. 54. line 4: Parawat instead of Parowat
line 6: "Cearenser," Carawat, are the people of Ceara
line 7: *pudeu'nye* instead of *pudeú'nye*
line 9: 1926 instead of 1826; Apiacá instead of Apaicá
p. 55. line 9: *ñçã*. ç pronounced as h (of "Phonetic Transcription of Indian Languages," Smithson. Misc. Coll., v. 66, no. 6, p. 14)
p. 56. line 14: *i pakpe'kn'nye* instead of *i pappéka'nye*
p. 57. last line: add: "Then the women grew sad, as they could no longer look upon the kaduke. They went sobbing into the Big House. And the men took possession, in their stead, of the Men's House".

[p. 57-A]